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## CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## INFORMATION REPORT

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.  
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.  
(FOR KEY SEE REVERSE)

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1. [ ] ship arrived in Ventspils late in the evening of 24 November 1953. At night very powerful searchlights were observed along the entire coast. 25X1
2. On arrival at the bouy about six nautical miles from Ventspils, [ ] ship signaled for a pilot; it then stopped about three nautical miles from the harbor. A small naval craft came out and put a light on [ ] ship. Then a pilot came out and took the ship up to the wharf on the north side of the harbor, just across from the naval station. During the ship's arrival, a loudspeaker at the harbor inlet played Russian music. As far as could be determined, the music was played for the exclusive benefit of [ ] ship. 25X1
3. Navigational conditions at Ventspils were good. There was 24 or 25 feet of water at some of the wharfs and good unloading facilities. The unloading was done by cranes and iron frames with barrel hooks in them. About 12 to 15 barrels could be held under each frame. 25X1
4. The work was done in three shifts around the clock and there were no interruptions in the work for meals. The unloading began on 25 November at 1330 hours and the ship was released at 1100 hours.(sic). The work was done smoothly and steadily the entire time. 25X1
5. The wharf was part of a sort of free harbor area. There was a similar area farther up the river. Both areas were set off by barbed wire and walls. Soldiers with drawn bayonets stood guard at the entrances as well as in small guard towers. In addition to showing a pass at the gangway, one also had to show the pass at the harbor area entrances. After that, however, there were no restrictions. The trip across the river by ferry to the city was free. 25X1
6. The city appeared to be very dilapidated. The houses were in need of repair, and the streets were poorly paved. There were wells in many places, as only the new houses had running water.

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7. There was a large area which seemed to be the market place. In addition, there were also a number of stores with goods displayed in the windows. The official rate of exchange used by Inflat was 1 pound sterling for 11 rubles, and 100 Danish kroner for 56 rubles. Prices in Ventspils were very high. For example, the following prices prevailed:
- a. 1 kilo of port cost 20 rubles.
  - b. 1 kilo of spiced herring cost 18 rubles.
  - c. 1 kilo of carrots cost a half-ruble.
  - d. An ordinary meat grinder with a hand crank cost 44.75 rubles.
  - e. A half pound of margarine cost 2.55 rubles.
  - f. A small piece of soap cost 1.15 rubles.
  - g. A fajance dish cost 5 rubles.
8. It was not possible to get any information about the salaries paid in the area, but the informant believed that the Inflat woman received 1,000 rubles per month. Formerly, as a customs official she had earned 2,000 rubles per month, and that was considered very good pay. The lesser customs personnel earned about 1,000 rubles per month. The workers could earn more than that, if they were willing to work extra long hours. These public workers also had the advantage of eating cheaply and well at the canteens at their place of work, and they also had the opportunity of obtaining quarters in government-owned buildings. The rent for these quarters cost between 20 to 30 rubles a month as compared with 100 rubles a month which the Inflat woman was paying for a non-government apartment with two rooms and a kitchen.
9. The inhabitants of Ventspils were surprisingly well-clothed and had warm overclothes. The workers aboard the ship were actually better clothed than English workers. They had warm hats and good gloves as well as quite good working clothes. The children were especially well-dressed. Informant did not believe that the population appeared exactly subdued, as the people could both laugh and enjoy themselves.
10. There were very many persons in uniform. Almost half of the inhabitants  in the city were in uniform.  half of the population carried on the control of the other half, and that those who were in control of one thing were fanatical about carrying out their duties in meticulous agreement with their regulations. Even if the regulation was ridiculous, they still carried it out, as if not to be suspended. It was not possible to change foreign currency in Ventspils.

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